

Life Lonely, Confusing In World Of Darkness, Blindfolded Writer Finds

Editor's Note: In an attempt to share however briefly and fleetingly the experiences of being blind, reporter Judith Wagner spent a day with her eyes blindfolded. She relates her reactions in the following story.

By JUDITH WAGNER
Times Staff Writer

I am helpless and frightened. I am turned around and confused. I am frustrated. Angry.

I am locked behind a wall of darkness. Rationally, I know this is an experiment — an experience designed to sensitize myself to the problems of the blind. But the gut-level reactions are strong and undeniable. The darkness is real.

Rosalyn Snow, personal adjustment instructor at the Toledo Society for the Blind, is nearby, watching. Guarding.

Communication Difficult

Communicating is more difficult than I imagined it would be. Facial expressions and body language are a secret shared by the sighted. I

s e n s e smiles, frowns, other wordless statements, but I can not respond because I only imagine their presence.

Inside the society's facilities, I am reasonably secure. But as soon as we venture outside, I feel a pitch-black loneliness, more desolate than any night.

The sidewalks have crevices which cause me to turn my ankle. Trucks roar by, sirens squeal in the distance. I am listening to the traffic flow, waiting, toes over the curb, for safe crossing, but noise from construction in the Civic Center Mall garbles the street sounds. I hear footsteps, approaching rapidly from behind. Who?

I must be aware of every building, cautious of pedestrians hurrying along. I must be conscious of the wind against my face as a sign that I am passing a parking lot or open space. I must detect gravel under my feet so I will know I am crossing an alley. I must be cautious of wheelchair ramps or I may veer into a busy street.

Last
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Series

No Offers Of Help

Mrs. Snow has told me to accept assistance, but no one offers to help me. As many times as I have walked along this very street, I am lost without my eyes. I am shocked to learn how little I have absorbed. I have looked but I have not seen; I have listened, but I have not heard.

The rain comes. Now everything is different. The rain has changed the sounds. I am tense. The world is locked out. Or am I locked in?

Without my eyes, daily routine becomes a series of monumental tasks: dressing, combing my hair, pouring my coffee, cleaning my house . . . all require concentration supreme . . . and patience.

Feelings Linger

Behind the wall of darkness is frustration, anger, turmoil, and fear, but the pith of it is existential loneliness—the sure knowledge that I alone understand what it is to be behind this particular wall.

The experiment ends, but the feelings linger.

"Blindness is a very personal thing," Mrs. Snow says. "No one really knows the circumstances of someone else's life.

Even a blind person can not understand the full meaning of blindness in another person's life."

Although her specialty is mobility training, Mrs. Snow works with Toledo Society for the Blind clients in many aspects of their rehabilitation.

A Message From Our President



John Goerlich

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National Blind Golf Tournament To Be Held In Toledo

June Event To Feature Comedian Bob Hope



Left to Right—Lions Club members Nate Hampshire, District Governor 13-A and Bob Oberhouse, Senior Deputy District Governor, Co-Chairmen of the 1975 tourney, are pictured with Charley Boswell, blind golf participant.

The challenging 7200 yard course at Belmont Country Club, Toledo, Ohio, has been selected as the site of the 30th National Blind Golfers' Tournament to be held June 13, 14, 15, 1975. This "Hope for the Blind" tourney will feature Bob Hope playing in various foursomes.

This marks the first time this tournament has been held in Ohio since it was instituted in 1938 at Duluth, Minnesota.

Blind golf all began with Duluth, Minnesota's Charlie Tooth, who, aided by family and friends, decided to play golf, despite his loss of sight. As a result of good hard practice, he was able to play some outstanding rounds of golf about which a national news story was written.

Soon, Charlie began to receive correspondence from other blind persons who had either started golf or resumed the game after becoming blind. It wasn't long before the idea of the blind golfing tournament was born.

Blind golfing tournaments follow U.S. Golf Association (Continued on page 2)

Early Reminder For 1975 Holiday Card Program

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you, one and all, for your gracious response to our 1974 Christmas Card Program. Again, this program was most successful for which we are extremely appreciative and grateful for every order received—large or small.

Because of your generous response, we are able to continue with our extracurricular activities such as summer camp, the community medical clinic at St. Vincent Hospital and family nights—to mention a few.

Even though it is only spring, the 1975 Christmas season will be upon us once again before we know it. To those of you who wish to have your holiday greeting cards ready for early mailing, we will send

three attractive Christmas card samples. To receive them, just fill out the enclosed postpaid order form and drop it in the mail.

Inflation has affected the Society's Christmas Card Program and the cost of our cards has gone up. If you wish, your cards may be imprinted with your name but please allow \$4.50 extra per card selection for this service.

Should you choose to order some of these lovely cards, you will be neither charged nor billed for them. Instead, we ask you to make a contribution to the Toledo Society for the Blind. Anything over the amount you normally spend for holiday greeting cards is tax deductible.

JOHN GOERLICH
President, Toledo Society for the Blind

Blind Golf

(Continued from page 1)

rules with the single exception that players may ground their clubs in hazards. Each player uses a caddie-coach who lines up shots, gives advice on rules and playing conditions.

"Not only are there 75 to 100 blind persons playing golf in this country today but many thousands are leading very normal, productive lives," said Reverend Phillip Rapp of the Northwest Ohio District Lions Clubs.

As an example, Reverend Rapp cited blind golfer Joe Lazaro, seven-time national champion and winner of the 29th National Tournament. Joe Lazaro admits he wasn't much of a golfer before entering the Army during World War II. After being blinded in Italy, he resumed the game and has achieved remarkable strides in golf. He has also become a leading fund-raiser for eye research in the New England area.

In 1968, Joe broke Charley Boswell's record at Rivermont Golf and Country Club in Chattanooga with rounds of 88 and 91—an astounding 179. The next year he achieved rounds of 80 and a record 77 at Weston Country Club in Massachusetts.

Now at age 56, Joe Lazaro is the defending champion and seems to be at the top of his game. At Belmont



Blind golfer Pat Brown's coach is lining up Pat's next shot.

Country Club, Joe will be aiming for his eighth blind golfing championship.

This National Blind Golfers Tournament is one of the best ways to raise funds for the extensive programs for the blind and, at the same time, vividly illustrate that blind persons can contribute to society. Funds raised through this event will be divided between the Toledo Society for the Blind, the Northwest Ohio Lions Eye Bank, Inc., and a new Blind Children's Fund.

We sincerely hope that many of our readers will attend this tournament not only for the enjoyment but, through the purchase of a ticket or an individual contribution, you will have helped a very worthy cause.

A Good Time Was Had By All



Mamie Jackson, blind senior citizen arrived at the Lions Club party with Dolores Hayes.

On December 11 Gladieux I was the scene of the 49th Lions Club Christmas party. Several hundred area blind persons and their families attended the annual affair. This is always the highlight of the year for the area blind population.

Otto Adler was the general chairman of the event with Don Edwards serving as Master of Ceremonies and Judge John W. Potter as the speaker for the evening.

Featured entertainers for the party were the Woodward High School Choraliuers under the very capable direction of Gordon Simpson. This group of young people gave an outstanding program which will long be remembered.

At the conclusion of the program, coffee, punch and homemade cookies donated by the Lions' ladies were served, followed by the distribution of gifts by the Lions Club.

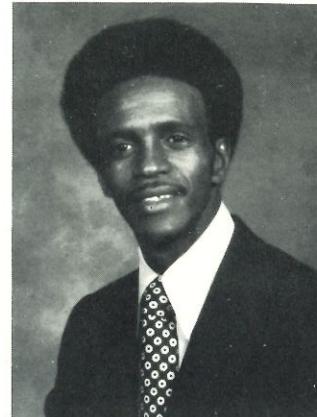
Transportation to and from this annual event is always arranged and provided by the Lions Club members.



The Sign Post

The Toledo Society for the Blind is deeply grateful and appreciative to the Certified Alarm System for their very generous donation of a fire alarm system which they installed throughout the Society's facility.

Society Announces New Board Member



Reverend Robert A. Culp

We are pleased to announce that the Reverend Robert A. Culp, pastor of the First Church of God, 1002 W. Bancroft Street, has been elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Toledo Society for the Blind.

Reverend Culp is a graduate of the Sharon, Pennsylvania public schools, received his BA degree from Anderson College and his Master of Divinity in the School of Theology, Anderson, Indiana.

He has enjoyed a successful career in the Toledo area. Reverend Culp has served as president of the National Association of the Church of God and the Toledo Chapter-NAACP. He is a member of the Toledo Council for Business and Christian Brothers Development Corporation and serves on the board of the Model Cities Policy Committee.

The Toledo Society for the Blind is happy to have the Reverend Robert Culp as a member of its Board of Directors.



Queen Naomi Caton and King Vernon Reinhardt shared royal honors at Camp Hemlock.

Camp Hemlock '74-'75

Every year from 1956 until 1973, the Toledo Society for the Blind has rented Camp Yukita on Catawba Island so that the blind could enjoy a week at camp.

However, in 1973 the Spring floods destroyed nearly all of the camp, so it became necessary to find another location.

It was decided to go to Camp Hemlock, operated by St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and located in the Hillsdale/Coldwater recreational area of Michigan.

So, in the Summer of 1974, a small, but enthusiastic group spent a very rewarding week at the new camp. Here the blind participate in swimming, boating, hayrides, games and most of the usual camping activities.

The attendees look forward to this "back to nature" activity each year for which the Society provides transportation.

For the 1975 season, the Society has rented Camp Hemlock for the week of August 10-17 and, already, many have signed up to go.

To Ohio Citizens, Fido!

In years past when you, our readers, went to the bank and had your children with you, it became a custom for the bank teller to give each youngster a lollipop. This was always a big treat!

Well, times have changed! With the family dog being gradually accepted in motels and airplanes and, generally, being included in the carload when mom runs her errands, the Ohio Citizens Trust Company thought it was about time that someone rewarded "Fido" for being a good dog.

So, back in September of 1964, something was done



about it and that's when it all began. It was decided to reward each canine passenger with two dog biscuits, but the only question was how could it be done most efficiently.

After doing some research and making many inquiries, it was decided to have the Toledo Society for the Blind participate in this new program, since they had several blind who needed work that could be done in their homes.

And so it was. The Society did and still does prepare the packages with the printing being done in the Ohio Citizens print shop. Each package of two biscuits bears the message "A Milk Bone treat for your pet from (arf!) Ohio Citizens." To date, 41,500 Milk Bones have been packaged and distributed, with the program still going strong.

There is a great need for home industry such as this. The Society has approximately two dozen persons who can no longer come to the Sheltered Workshop or can only work for short periods of time due to health problems. If any of our readers knows of or has any work that can be done in a blind person's home, please contact the Toledo Society for the Blind.

Pictured in his home, as a participant in the Ohio Citizens doggie biscuit program, is Clarence (Bud) Felbinger. Bud first became known to the Society in August, 1964, shortly after becoming blind. He came to work in the Sheltered Workshop, March of 1966 and continued until an arthritic condition in his back forced him to retire in January, 1970. Since then, Bud has been doing small assembly and packaging work in his home as it is available. Bud Felbinger is one of many blind persons who would like to do this same type of work in their homes.